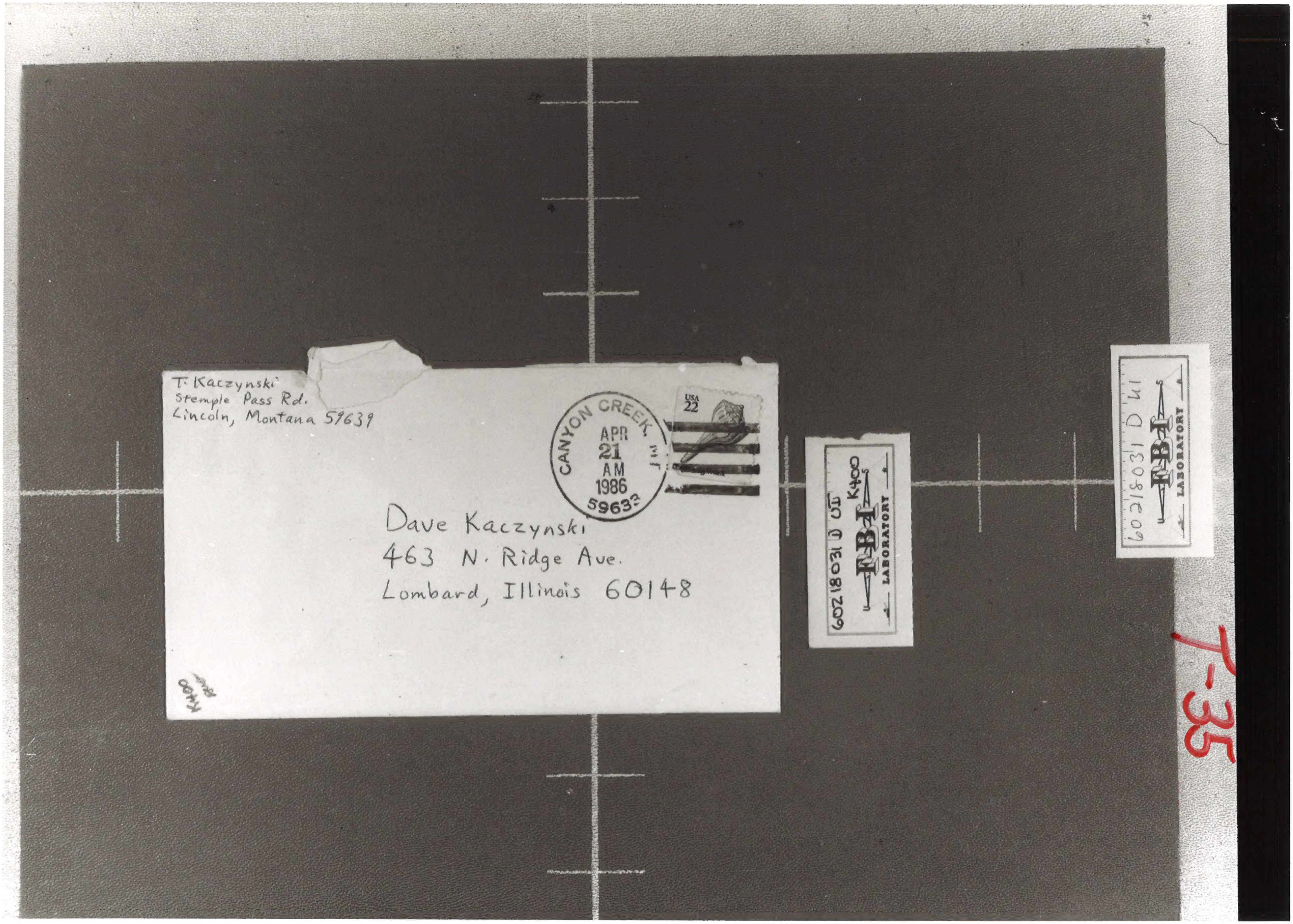
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Dear Dave:

I apologize for calling you a son of a bitch and other harsh language that I used in my last letter. But, you know, I was mad. I'm not mad any more, and you can send me that book for my birthday if you want to — or don't send it if you don't want to — whatever you may prefer. But don't send me any letters for awhile yet, (unless for some urgent reason) cause if you start raking up all that old family stuff you may just get me upset again, and having just got over being upset, I don't feel like getting upset again for awhile yet. Later on we can discuss some of these things further if you want to.

Meanwhile I'll mention the following: As to your hypothesis that I have an unconscious hatred of you, I'll mention that I don't recall ever having had any dreams about you that would suggest hostility or antagonism, but I've had quite a few dreams about you that indicate friendly, loving, and suchlike feelings toward you. Of course, you can always argue that I have a hatred for you that is so deeply repressed that even in dreams it appears only in cryptic symbols that I am unable to interpret.

There is no way of disproving such a supposition — but is it likely? Do you have any evidence to support such a hypothesis? Can you suggest any reason why, if I hated you, I would not permit myself to be conscious of that feeling? I am certainly ready enough to feel other resentments consciously, including resentments toward "forbidden" objects such

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as parents.

It's true that during my teens there was a good deal of antagonism at times between us, but I see no reason to believe that this goes back to any such source as you suggested. In the first place, kids will have their quarrels in any case. In the second place, I was often treated badly both by our parents and by the kids in school, and being unable to retaliate effectively against them, my anger unfortunately tended to find an outlet in rough treatment of you. Finally, our parents made matters worse: you'll recall that when we got into a quarrel, our parents often would automatically throw the blame on me without even inquiring into the matter. When I then complained that "Dave did such-and-such", they would just answer — "That doesn't matter. You're older — you should be more mature." (Of course they often got into screaming matches with me, but apparently it didn't occur to them that they were older and should be more mature.) This wasn't favoritism on their part — it was just laziness. To inquire into the source of the dispute and then try to settle it fairly would have taken an effort. It was much easier to just throw the burden of keeping the peace on the older kid. When they did this, naturally it resulted in resentment on my part, which caused me to be more aggressive with you on the next occasion.

But insofar as it is possible to be confident of such things, I feel confident

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that I have no unconscious resentment of you. I wouldn't be likely to hide from myself any resentments that I might feel!

By the way, while I'm on the subject of our parents' tendency to blame on me anything that went wrong when we were together, there's something that always touches me when I remember it: According to our parents, when you cut your hand, the surgeons said that you kept saying: "Don't blame Teddy, don't blame Teddy!"

You say Dad claims he once sent me an apology. I don't remember it. Of course I can't claim to have a perfect memory, but that's not the kind of thing I would be likely to forget. It may be that Dad's memory is playing tricks on him — you know how much he used to complain about memory problems. People sometimes plan out something to say, and never get around to actually saying it; then later they think they actually said it. What they are remembering is the speech they composed in their mind and not what they actually said. Another possible explanation of the contradiction is that Dad might have sent me some kind of a half-assed incomplete apology full of rationalizations; or that he apologized for some one or two particular incidents. Since I wouldn't have had much regard for any such half-apology, it's possible I might have forgotten it. But if he'd sent me anything approaching a full and satisfactory apology, I find it difficult to imagine that I

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could have forgotten it.
Also, are you sure that you are remembering correctly what he told you? Some minor error of memory could put an entirely different complexion on the matter. I've noticed that from time to time you make errors of memory in your letters — unless it's my memory that's wrong. Example:
In your last letter you wrote "When you saw the murdered babies in the Nazi camp ... you vowed to protect me at the expense of your own life ..."
As I remember it, I didn't refer to "murdered" babies, but to kids who had been reduced to extreme emaciation through starvation. Also, I said that I decided to "do anything I could to protect you" — I don't think I said anything about "at the expense of my own life". If you still have that letter you might look up the relevant passage and see which of us is remembering more accurately.

No, I won't get frustrated if you don't absorb my corrections of your Spanish.

As for your blood pressure, I don't know what you're worried about. Diastolic pressure of 65 or 75 is excellent — typical normal reading I take it is about 80. A single reading doesn't mean anything, since all kinds of factors can temporarily vary your reading. Systolic pressure of 150 probably is no particular reason for concern — it's on the borderline of high, but I understand that the diastolic (lower)

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reading is the important one. Diastolic reading of 90 is on borderline between normal and high, but if you're 20 lb. overweight, what do you expect? Get your wght back to 150, and if your reading goes back to 75 I'd say you're in excellent shape. As for increase of pressure with age, I don't doubt that the population as a whole shows a statistical tendency to this, but it needn't take place in every given individual. I've taken my pressure occasionally over the last 8 years or ~~so~~, and though it fluctuates somewhat I have not observed any upward trend.

—Ted

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